DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 308 572 EA 020 957

AUTHOR Chichura, Elaine Marie
TITLE The Role of the Board of Education in the Process of Resource Allocation for Public Schools.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, March 27-31, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Boards of Education; *Budgeting; Elementary Secondary Education; *Organizational Theories; *Politics of Education; *Public Schools; *Resource Allocation
IDENTIFIERS *Garbage Can Theory; *Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

Public schools as formal organizations have broad-based goals, limited resources, and a formal hierarchy with which to manage the goal achievement process. The board of education combines this organization's economic and political dimensions to provide a thorough, efficient education for all children in the state. This paper investigates the board's role in the public school resource allocation process, examining its legal basis, composition, responsibilities, and economic environment. To analyze specific school board behaviors in terms of decision-making, three theoretical perspectives (the rational, the bureaucratic, and the political models) were used. The actual district funding levels for education are related to four sets of interacting variables--governmental, economic, demographic/social, and political/administrative. Boards using a rational model of resource allocation would exhibit behaviors directed toward improving student achievement. Boards using a bureaucratic decision-making model would focus on maintaining the status quo or would promote stability by following predetermined rules and systems for action. Boards using a political economy model, strongly directed by their need to avoid conflict, might deviate from organizational goals by responding to perceived wants, needs, and self-interests of influential constituents. The study examined four northeastern Pennsylvania school districts. Data were obtained through budget session tapings and 37 interviews with representative members from the four districts. The research clearly indicates that an interaction of all four models was present in the school districts examined. The resultant model resembles the "garbage can model" of organizational choice. The extent of each model's use varied with the different situations encountered. (18 references) (MLH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED308572

The Role of the Board of Education in the Process of Resource Allocation for Public Schools

by

Elaine Marie Chichura

Presentation Paper

American Educational Research Association

March 27-31, 1989

EA 020 957

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Elaine Marie Chichura

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The Role of the Board of Education in the Process of Resource Allocation for Public Schools

Purpose of the Study

> Allocation of resources among different programs in the district budget is a critical function of the budget. If funding were unlimited, there would be no need to make any choices among district programs, and each program would receive all the requested resources. However, resources are limited and choices have to be made on how the monies will be spent. (Hartman, 1988, p. 4)

Therefore, central to the concept of resource allocation was the decision-making process utilized to distribute the resources and an understanding of the organizational structures and the overall constraints within which the allocation decisions were made.

Public schools as formal organizations have broad-based goals, limited access to resources with which to achieve those goals, and a formal hierarchy with which to manage the process of goal achievement. The board of education has the unique function of combining the economic and the political dimensions of this formal organization in an effort to provide and maintain a thorough and an efficient education for all children of the state.

There existed the need to define and examine how school boards made resource allocation decisions. More specifically, the need existed to determine the extent to which resource allocation decisions were based on the formal goals of the organization, on the structure of the organization, or on the self-interests of the individuals associated with the organization. Results of this study will provide a basis for understanding the decision-making process as it currently exists and will enable the board of education to better meet the goals of public education, thus improving the educational process through more effective resource allocations.

Conceptual - Theoretical Framework

This study investigated the role of the board of education in the process of resource allocation for public schools. To provide the conceptual framework for conducting the study and analyzing the results, several related research areas were drawn upon. First, the role of school boards as governing units - their legal basis, their composition, and their responsibilities - was examined. Since school boards make budgetary decisions within the fiscal capacity of their districts an understanding of economic environment within which boards operate was required. To analyze specific school board behaviors in terms of the decision-making process three theoretical perspectives - the rational, the bureaucratic, and the political models - were utilized. They represent a range of possible explanations of the role that school boards play in the process of resource allocations for public schools.

The actual levels of funding for education contributed by the local school district have been related to four sets of interacting variables (Jones, 1985, p. 201). One set of variables was generally titled governmental. This set of variables involved the amount and the type of federal and state aid made available to local districts. A second set of variables, termed the economic variables, dealt with the economic conditions of the local district and included the property wealth of the district and how that wealth was distributed (i. e., residential, commercial, industrial); in addition, they also included the personal income of residents and the number of unemployed residents. A third set of variables was the demographic and the social composition of the district. This set of variables included the size of the district; the population density; the educational levels of voters; the occupational status of voters; and the racial, the ethnic, and the religious composition of the local school district. The fourth and final set of variables was referred to as the political and the administrative variables. These variables included descriptors of the members of the board of education and the district administration,

particularly the superintendent (Jones, 1985, p. 201).

The rational model approach to decision-making emphasized knowledge and understanding on the part of the decison-maker concerning inputs, outputs, and processes of implementing decisions. Inputs referred to the necessary resources, the ingredients, or the elements needed to carry out a particular decision. Outputs represented the desired goals or the desired results anticipated from the implementation of a particular decision. Process referred to an essential link of knowledge, of understanding, and of efficiency between the inputs and the outputs of a decision (Cibulka, 1987, pp. 8-13). This model implied that decisions were based on logic and purposeful reasoning (Stokey & Zeckhauser, 1978, p. 3) and assumed that decision makers were aware of predetermined and prioritized goals of the organization. More importantly, it assumed that decision makers had an active desire to achieve those goals in the most efficient manner (Cibulka, 1987, p. 13).

Examples of budgeting approaches based on the rational model were the planning-program-budgeting system (PPBS), performance budgeting, and zero-based budgeting (Cibulka, 1987, p. 8). These systems of budgeting represented attempts to improve school productivity and were based on the following assumptions:

- one or more agreed-upon "products" or learning outcomes;
- a "scientific" instrument for measuring student progress toward those outcomes; and
- research techniques that make it possible to separate schooling effects from out-of-school influences (such as home environment and individual IQ) upon student achievement. (Garmes, Guthrie, & Pierce, 1978, p. 249)

A board of education which utilized a rational model approach to decision-making in the area of resource allocation would exhibit behavior, both purposeful and deliberate, directed toward improving student achievement. According to Peterson (1976, pp 134-135), the usefulness of the rational model "depends on showing that board members agreed on certain

objectives, that reference to these objectives was made during the course of policy making, and that policy outcomes were consistent with these objectives." Budgetary planning would be systematic, procedural, and goal-directed with little if any responsiveness shown to short-term or external pressures (Cibulka, 1987, pp. 8, 12-13).

The bureaucratic model originated with a theory of organization based on the work of Max Weber. In defining an ideal bureaucracy, Weber cited the following characteristics as described by Hall and listed in Owens (1981, pp. 10-11):

1. A division of labor based on functional specialization;
2. A well-defined hierarchy of authority;
3. A system of rules covering the rights and duties of employees;
4. A system of procedures for dealing with work situations;
5. Impersonality of interpersonal relations;
6. Selection and promotion based only on technical competence.

This type of organizational structure was intended to simplify the system of administration and the management of large and complex organizations which served a large clientele (Owens, 1981, p. 12). Behavior within these organizations was highly dependent on preestablished routines or standard operating procedures (Allison, 1971, pp. 81-83). The concepts of authority, of responsibility, and of policy development typically flowed from the top levels of the bureaucratic organization down through the lower levels of the organization. Standard operating procedures (SOP's), often developed by the upper levels of the organization, were defined by Allison (1971, p. 68) as "rules according to which things are done" and as "routines for dealing with standard situations." The SOP's, structured in a simple manner, were easily understood and implemented on a regular basis by a large number of individuals (Allison, 1971, p. 83). Situations not dealt with through the utilization of SOP's appeared slow, formal, and often inappropriate. The functioning of large organizations on the basis of a routine means of operation was described as an inevitable feature of the exercise of public authority in modern society (Allison, 1971, p. 266).

A system of budgeting representative of the bureaucratic model was that of incrementalism. Incremental budgeting as described by Wildavsky (1975, pp. 5-6) was one in which the process of budget development was directly linked to and directly dependent on the previous year's budget. With this method of budgeting a large portion of the budget was determined by previous decisions and long-term planning. In terms of education examples of budgetary items included here would be mandatory curricular programs and negotiated salaries.

A school board utilizing a bureaucratic decision-making model for budgetary development would focus on maintaining the status quo within the organization and maintaining an atmosphere of stability by allowing few changes which would act to minimize conflict within the organization (Meyer, M. W., 1971, p. 7). In this approach decisions would be made following predetermined rules and systems for action rather than being based on performance or organizational goal-directed criteria.

The political model approaches to decision-making described the process of decision-making in public schools from two different perspectives. These were power or control and the theory of public choice. Both of these perspectives centered on the concept of self-interest.

The power or control model of decision-making is based on the concept of local control. This concept of control is supported by the governmental structure legally established to provide education as a service. Within this structure the local board of education was responsible for making decisions which reflected the larger school community. This larger school community included the administration, the teachers, the students, and the local citizens (McGivney & Moynihan, 1972). Often these segments of the larger school community organized to reflect interests concerning particular issues or to represent general group interests. These groups were referred to as special-interest groups.

Special-interest group activity was often aimed at influencing the decision-making

processes and the policy formation of the board of education. In general, it was believed that the boards of education tended to be most responsive to interest groups which were internal to the school organization, particularly the local teacher's association. It was also found that the boards of education were most likely to be responsive to interest groups representing issues which were highly visible in the community and external to the school organization. Examples of these issues included taxation, finance, and building concerns (Zeigler, Jennings, & Peak, 1974, pp. 96-102). In this manner it was clear that the board of education was a political entity, making decisions of political consequence in the community (Garmes, Guthrie, & Pierce, 1978, p. 327).

While there was a multitude of research on politics in public schools, this study was particularly concerned with the research which examined specific influential forces and pressures on the board of education as the central decision-making body within school systems. An example of one such study was conducted by Kerr (1964). He argued, at least for suburban school districts, that the board of education functioned to legitimatize or "rubber stamp" policies of school systems as controlled by the superintendent and the professional educators.

In contrast, Vidich and Bensman (1969) described a different situation occurring in small, rural school districts. In the district described, the community appeared to have a greater impact on the functioning of the school system.

Other theories, such as the dissatisfaction theory as described by Lutz (1980), present still another view of influences on the functioning of the board of education. This theory, which focused on the rate of participation in governance, stated that participation in school governance increased when the public was dissatisfied.

School boards functioning under a political power or a control decision-making model for budget development would be strongly influenced by and responsive to their perceptions of

the wants, the needs, and the self-interests of significant influential segments or special interest groups within the larger community they had been elected to represent.

The public choice or political economy models, which represented alternative political approaches to decision-making, viewed resource allocation decisions as a function of the behavior of self-interested individuals reflecting their personal needs, personal values, and personal goals (Hartman, 1987, p. 11). This concept, as described by Boyd (1982, pp. 113-115), involved the tension created through the interaction of the goals of the individual and the more formal goals of the organization. The costs and the benefits of action influenced behavior and ultimately affected the functioning of the organization.

A political economy view implied that members of the board of education may not have organizational goals in mind when making resource allocation decisions. The board of education, more strongly influenced and directed by their own need to avoid conflict, may be more responsive to their perceptions of the wants, the needs, and the self-interests of the school district employees. Under this decision-making model the board of education's responsiveness to teacher personal-need satisfaction would be shown through the fair and the equitable treatment of all teachers within the school district with special attention being paid to this group during district budget development.

Using the public choice model of decision-making, the board of education would also be influenced by the recommendations of the school district administration, in terms of their own self-interests, to avoid conflict and maintain good relations with the teaching staff and the community. With this decision-making model the goal of satisfying the self-interests of the school district employees replaces the more formal goals of the school, such as meeting student needs and increasing student achievement levels.

Data Collection Method

A systematic case study approach which examined four school districts located in northeastern Pennsylvania was utilized to study the decision-making role of the board of education in resource allocation for public schools. The school districts were selected as a result of their size, their economic conditions, the length of superintendent tenure, and the predominant social class composition. Two districts were selected to represent smaller, more rural schools reflecting traditional values. The other two school districts were selected to represent a larger, more suburban type of community climate. Information concerning the actual identity of participating districts was held confidential for the reporting of the study. Results were reported by referring to the two rural districts as District "A" and District "B"; the two larger districts were designated District "C" and District "D."

The descriptive component of the study resulted from data collected through the review of state and district documents, through direct observations of board of education behavior at formal public meetings, and also through personal interviews with selected individuals. With data collected during the 1987-1988 school year, the study focused on the role of the board of education in the planning and the adoption of school district budgets for the 1988-1989 school year.

The researcher attended and tape-recorded meetings pertaining to the planning and the adoption of the budget. The budget meetings reported in the research included both public and closed executive sessions conducted by the four boards of education. Observations included the presentation of the budget to the board, documentation of questions asked by the board members, documentation of the community response to the budget presentation, documentation of any apparent conflict, documentation of any board reaction or response to conflict, and documentation of reasons given publicly by the board members to justify their particular vote

on both the tentative and the final budgets. In total, the research reported on thirty-two meetings or approximately seventy-four hours of meeting time in the four school districts involving the boards' of education budgetary planning and decision-making.

The interview process involved a total of thirty-seven personal interviews with representative members from the four school districts. The personal interviews alone provided a total of approximately fifty hours of tape-recorded data. In order to obtain a complete and unbiased description of the role that the board of education plays in the budgetary decision-making process interview subjects representing different segments of the larger school community were selected to participate in the research. The participants selected for being interviewed in each school district included three individuals representing the board of education, the superintendent, the business manager, two members of the teachers' association, and two members of the community. In one of the districts four board members were interviewed because of the interest each had expressed by personally volunteering to participate in the research.

The analytical component of this study involved the examination of the descriptive data in terms of conceptual models of the rational, the bureaucratic, and the political approaches to the process of decision-making. Data from the descriptive portion of this study were compared and contrasted in terms of the theoretical perspectives presented in the review of selected literature. This comparison was done to determine which theoretical model or combination of models best described the role of the board of education in the process of resource allocation for public schools.

Findings

Specific questions posed by the research and the resultant answers to those questions follow:

1. What procedures do school boards use for the development of district budgets?

In all four school districts involved in the research, the board of education was involved in the budget development process as a committee of the whole. Even though Districts A, C, and D each utilized a type of subcommittee structure to conduct the duties and the responsibilities assigned to the board of education, none of the districts assigned the specific duties associated with the process of budget development to a select subcommittee. At the time of the research, all of the districts, except District B, were in the initial stages of developing long-range financial planning committees which were expected to become involved in the development of the budget for the 1989-90 school year. All of the proposed planning committees were expected to involve members of the board of education, the administration, and interested members of the community.

All four school districts examined followed timelines for board participation in the development of the budget, but those timelines varied with each district. While over half of the members of the board of education had indicated that they have informal input into the budget development process on a continual, year-round basis, they also identified more specific timelines for their formal participation in the process. For example, in District A the board of education had only one meeting where members specifically reviewed the proposed budget prior to the actual vote for preliminary adoption of the budget. In contrast, members of the board of education in District D held seven meetings directly pertaining to budget development.

Areas of the district budget directly determined as a result of decisions made by the board of education centered primarily on educational programs or offerings which were not

mandated by the state or the federal government and areas which were of special interest to the community. Examples of these budget items found in the research were projects concerning buildings and facilities, athletics, the band, and special curriculums, such as the family life curriculum in District D and the advanced levels of language classes offered in Districts C and D.

Areas of the district budget not directly determined as a result of decisions of the board of education represented the largest portion of the total district budget in each of the four school districts examined. Estimates found in the research which indicated the portion of the district budget that was not directly controlled by the board of education ranged from sixty to ninety-five percent. The largest portion of these uncontrollable expenditures was associated with professional employees salaries and benefits. As was specifically discussed in the description of District A, the board of education does participate in contract negotiations with the professional staff. However, the research indicated that the board had experienced only a limited amount of control over salaries through that process. The limited control experienced by the board of education was primarily related to the use of multi-year contracts in association with district budgets which were prepared and implemented on an annual basis. As one superintendent had stated, "The board has no control over eighty percent of the budget once the contract decision is made." New members of the board of education experienced a total lack of control over this area of the budget since they had not even been members of the board during the time that contracts were negotiated.

The board of education was found to participate to varying degrees in different areas of the district budget. In each of the four school districts studied, the boards participated to a greater extent in the areas of the budget where they demonstrated personal experience and familiarity. For example, decisions affecting the educational programs, such as textbook selection and purchase, were made as a direct result of the input received from professional

educators while decisions concerning buildings and facilities were often made as a direct result of input from specific members of the board of education.

2. Which theoretical model or combination of models best describes the role of the board of education in the process of resource allocation for public schools?

The data describing the role of the decision-making models were summarized and presented in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1: Concepts Supportive of Decision-Making Models, summarized findings from all four school districts which supported the existence of the theoretical decision-making models. Concepts pertaining to each of the four decision-making models were listed in order of the frequency of their occurrence in the four school districts examined. The frequency of occurrence referred to the number of school districts in which a specific concept was found. A frequency of "4" indicated the concept was found in each of the school districts that had participated in the study. This frequency was listed to the right of each of the concepts listed in the figure.

Figure 2: Concepts Arguing Against the Existence of Decision-Making Models, used a similar method to summarize findings from all four school districts which argued against the existence of the theoretical decision-making models. Again, the frequency of occurrence of each of the concepts was listed to the right of each concept in the figure.

As can be seen when reviewing Figure 1: Concepts Supportive of Decision-Making Models, the goals of education were present in the budgetary decision-making process within each of the four school districts studied. However, those goals were often stated in terms of "providing for the needs of students." As was indicated by Figure 2: Concepts Arguing Against the Existence of Decision-Making Models, specific student needs were left undefined in each district. Budgetary planning which followed a true rational model of decision-making was

RATIONAL MODEL		BUREAUCRATIC MODEL		POLITICAL - POWER OR CONTROL MODEL		POLITICAL - PUBLIC CHOICE MODEL	
goals	4	use of SOP's	4	special interests	4	wants and needs of staff	3
zero-based budgeting	2	previous decisions	3	avoidance of dissatisfaction	4	fair and equitable to staff	3
outputs	2	fixed costs	2	rubber stamp	3	wants and needs of public	1
performance budgeting	1	comparison of budgets	2	central role of school	2	reward and motivate staff	1
production-function	1	status quo to minimize conflict	2	trustee vs. representative	1	participative management	1
priorities	1	chain of command	2			conflict avoidance	1
board control - curriculum	1	long-range financial planning	1				
program budgeting	1	span of control	1				
willingness to spend money	1	policies and procedures	1				
efficiency	1	incremental budgeting	1				

Figure 1: Concepts Supportive of Decision-Making Models

RATIONAL MODEL		BUREAUCRATIC MODEL		POLITICAL - POWER OR CONTROL MODEL		POLITICAL - PUBLIC CHOICE MODEL	
undefined student "needs"	4	no formal budget comparison	4	absence of rubber stamp	4	unequitable to staff	2
noneducational goals	2	budget changes were dependent	3	community apathy	2	limited control	2
educational process unclear	2	no long-range financial planning	3	lack of community involvement	2	lack of control	1
lack of control over budget	2	LRFPC not functional	1			limited concern for staff	1
unclear measure of outputs	1	elimination of allotment system	1				
reverse production-function	1						
no link of inputs and outputs	1						
no measure of outputs	1						
absence of zero-based budget	1						
limited control over inputs	1						
lack of efficiency	1						

Figure 2: Concepts Arguing Against the Existence of Decision-Making Models

described as being systematic and procedural and was directed toward increasing student achievement. The rational model was based on the assumptions of control over inputs, a measure of outputs, and an understanding of the process of education. Data presented indicated a desire on the part of the board to make decisions in a rational manner but at the same time clearly indicated their inability to function in this manner. The board of education simply did not know how to directly link the district budget with student achievement in spite of their concern for providing for student needs. A general comparison of data from all four school districts indicated that of the four theoretical perspectives examined the rational model of decision-making was the only model which was found to have had more concepts occurring with the largest total frequency which argued against the existence of model.

In each of the four school districts resources were often allocated on the basis of utilization of standard operating procedures as was indicated in Figure 1. These procedures, based on previous decisions, were often implemented in order to avoid conflict and to simplify the decision-making process. However, as indicated in Figure 2, methods used to make budgetary decisions were dependent on individual budget categories and were not made based on a formal comparison with or link to the previous year's budget. Comparison of budgets by members of the board were on an informal and individual basis. As with the rational model of decision-making, members of the board expressed a desire and a belief that they should function in a bureaucratic manner when making budgetary decisions, but they were often unable to function in that manner.

In each of the four school districts examined, the board of education was keenly aware of the special interests of the larger school community and expressed a concern for satisfying those interests. In addition, each of the boards exhibited behaviors which expressed their desire to avoid community dissatisfaction. While often indicating a desire to function in a more

rational or bureaucratic manner, the boards in each of the four school districts recognized their responsibility to protect the public interests in the local system of education.

Concern for the self-interests of school employees also played a somewhat limited role in the board's budgetary decision-making process. This concern for employees was observed to varying degrees in the different districts involved in the research. For example, in Districts C and D there was even a lack of reference to the needs, the values, or the goals of individuals in the school organization when district budgetary decisions were made. District A exhibited a stronger concern for employee self-interests, but to a large extent the board was unable to act on that concern because of the legal constraints within which they were forced to function.

The source and the amount of revenues available for education had a direct impact on the resource allocation decisions of the board of education. Federal funds were found to have only a limited impact on the board's resource allocation decisions because those funds were often in the form of categorical funding which limited the flexibility of their use at the local school district level.

In terms of total resources available to school districts, the flexibility of the board to determine the level of local funding available was vital to the budgetary decision-making process. For example, District D had a strictly limited total amount of funding available for the 1988-89 school year because of a number of factors which were unique to that district. One such factor was the county's reassessment of property values which placed a legally determined limit of ten percent on property tax increases. Another important factor was an unsettled lawsuit in which the district was involved. In addition to these two somewhat unique conditions, the district was also faced with receiving a much smaller than expected increase in state subsidies. These combined factors placed a severe limitation on the spending capacity of the school district. The frustration experienced by the board of education in trying to make

budgetary decisions when members were faced with such constraints was directly observed in the number of budgetary meetings conducted by the board of education in District D. While another district conducted only one official budgetary planning session prior to the preliminary adoption of the budget, District D conducted seven sessions for that particular purpose. Another example of this frustration was observed in the final vote to adopt the budget. In District D the final vote to adopt the budget formally was five "yes" and four "no" votes. In contrast, the strongest opposition to the adoption of the final budget in other districts was witnessed in a final vote of seven "yes" and two "no" votes. This frustration was also directly voiced by one member of the board of education in District D just prior to the termination of the research in that district. At the meeting which immediately followed the final adoption of the budget, this member submitted a formal letter of resignation to the board of education. In the letter he explained that his resignation was directly related to his opposition to the budget which had just been adopted. This opposition was identified in a large part with the fact that the district had adopted a budget with a larger expenditure increase than a revenue increase for the upcoming school year.

Resource Allocation Model

As a result of the findings of the research, a model was developed and presented in Figure 3: Resource Allocation Model. This model depicts the utilization of a combination of all four decision-making models by the board of education in making resource allocation decisions. The research clearly indicated that an interaction of all four models was present in the school districts which were examined .

At the center of this model is the rational model of decision-making. As was described, a desire to make decisions in a rational manner and a concern for student needs were present in

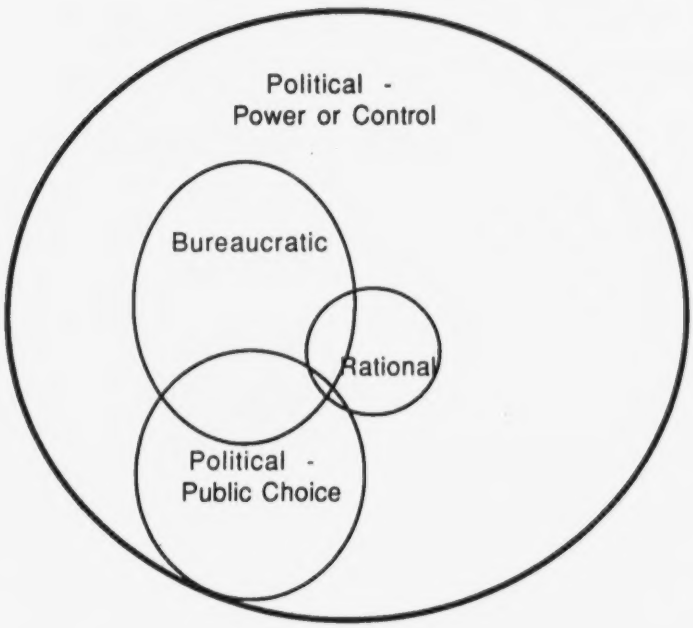

Figure 3: Resource Allocation Model

each of the four school districts studied. The size and the location of the rational model in the figure indicates that this model plays a minor role in the overall process of budget development, but it still represents the ultimate or central concern of the board of education.

The bureaucratic model is also shown to be a feature in the overall process of resource allocation. This model, depicted as slightly larger, is located just above the rational model in the figure. The larger size of the bureaucratic model indicated its more frequent application to various areas of the process of budget development. The interaction between the bureaucratic model and the rational model represented instances in the budget development process when the board of education made resource allocation decisions by using bureaucratic methods to achieve rational goals. An example of this use of bureaucratic methods is the use of a purchasing cycle for textbook replacement. The interaction of the bureaucratic model and the public choice model indicated a similar situation where bureaucratic methods were utilized to deal with employees in a fair and equitable manner to avoid conflict at this level.

The public choice model was depicted as having a minor interaction with the rational model. This interaction of these two models appeared in the research but only to a limited extent. In addition, the motives for this interaction were not clearly defined in the research. The location of public choice at the bottom of the model indicated that this model played a role which was secondary to that of the other three models examined.

The power or control model was presented as the dominant model of decision-making used by the board of education in making resource allocation decisions. In all areas of budget development, the power or control model appeared to be a factor interacting with the other models of decision-making. The circular representation of the resource model suggests that the process is cyclical and never ending, in addition to being interacting constantly with the component parts of the overall process.

The Resource Allocation Model contains elements which appeared to be somewhat similar to the Garbage Can Model of organizational choice as described by Cohen, March, and Olsen (1986, pp. 311 - 314). The Garbage Can Model described the decision-making process in organizations which were characterized as organized anarchies. These organizations were defined as having unclear and/or unspecified goals, unclear technology, and fluid participation. Educational organizations were identified as one type of organization which demonstrated these particular features (Cohen, March, and Olsen, pp. 311 - 312).

The Garbage Can Model described the process of decision-making as one which was resultant from the complicated interaction of problems, participants, solutions and the opportunity for choice (Cohen, March, and Olsen, pp. 313 -314). Problems were defined as the concerns of individuals from inside as well as from outside the organization. Participants were defined as individuals interacting with the problems of the organization on a somewhat temporary or fluid basis. Solutions referred to actual decisions which were made by the organizations participants. The opportunity for choice referred to the specific times or occasions when an organization was expected to make decisions (Cohen, March, and Olsen, pp. 313-314).

Rather than describing the decision-making process of educational organizations as a rational and/or systematic process both the Resource Allocation Model and the Garbage Can Model were based on the complicated interaction of organizational components. This complicated interaction offers a possible explanation for the apparent contradictions, chaos, and imprecision found in the data collected as a result of this research.

Examples of the interaction described in the resource allocation model were presented throughout the study. Specific statements follow to support the assumptions upon which the

model was developed.

Data presented from District A suggest that no one model of decision-making was used exclusively by the board of education to make resource allocation decisions for the district. This conclusion was most appropriately described by a veteran member of the board when he said, "Looking at the school as a business, I have to look at three things. Personally, you have to think about the education of the kids, you have to think about the taxpayers who are directly or indirectly footing the bill, and you have to think about all of your employees. And I don't know which one of those is most important. I think they are all equally important. If you rukey-duke one of them, boy, does it drastically affect the rest. If you are not fair with your employees, they know about it right away. That is the cruelest thing you can do - not be fair with your employees. By the same token you need to be fair and responsible to the taxpayers and the kids."

In District B a similar conclusion was described by a member of the board of education during his interview when he said, "We [the board] have to listen to what the teachers have to say and to what the public has to say. And we have to sit in the middle and try to make a decision that benefits all sides, but mainly the student. You have to ask, 'How is it going to benefit the students?'" He continued , "You have to ask what the public wants and what are your needs [educationally]." Another member of the board of education showed agreement with this statement when he said, "Everyone is always worried about a tax increase. How many mills will this cost? How many mills will that cost? And we try to arrive at a happy medium, without knocking out any programs that are worthwhile and still adding programs that are worthwhile and doing things that are worthwhile. The board is concerned about tax increases, but increases are program by program."

Another example of this interaction was most appropriately described by one member of the board of education from District C. During his interview he said, "It is going to cost us so

much to educate the students. I have to be aware of that cost versus the people that are going to pay for that, and I have to judge it accordingly. The goals of education in the policy manual are met in the budget process. Overall, we consider the students, the staff, and the facilities in the budget process."

A balance approach was described in District D, when once again this same interaction of decision-making models was expressed. The process was described as being one which reflected the idea that the board of education was forced to act as a balancing agent in making resource allocation decisions. This balance of models was described by various individuals who had been interviewed for the research. For example, the business manager said, "They [the board] are in a precarious position. They have to balance two sides. They have to look at education and at what is needed for the district, and they have to look at the taxpayer. They get the influence from both sides." She also explained that the board itself represents a balance of interests when she described the board as being divided into three groups, each group having a different area of expertise. The three groups that she identified were those members who had a strong educational orientation, those who had a strong financial orientation, and those who had a strong maintenance orientation. She said, "All of these factions have to interact. It's a give-and-take. All three have to compromise." When asked whether community groups affect the budgetary decisions of the board, she again referred to the different factions of the board. She said, "It depends, With certain board members it will have more of an impact than with others. If it is a board member that's looking at the fiscal portion of the budget, he will ask, 'Is it economically sound to have a teacher for three children?' They will definitely look at that situation and say, 'No, it's not.' If you are looking at those board members with an educational orientation, they will say, 'These children plan to go on to further their education, and they will need these courses.' So it ends up to be a discussion, a give-and-take that the board has to go through."

A member of the board said, "The allocation of total resources for education is the main duty of the board. It's the board's responsibility to keep pressure on the system to run efficiently, especially when we are faced with limited resources. We need to keep the purse strings tight enough to encourage the professional to be efficient. We try to make the superintendent and the business manager justify their numbers. Our goal is to keep staff morale up and the cost to the community down. It's a factor of good management." He continued, "The board is a balancing force. If we keep our thumb on expenses too strongly, we discourage the educational process. We discourage our professional staff. Our staff needs a good atmosphere and a good feeling. If not, some of the good teachers will leave, and we already employ too many mediocre teachers." He also explained another type of balance when he said, "We all want the budget to decrease, but the special interests want it to increase. The board and the superintendent are responsible for keeping it in balance."

A member of the community summarized the same concept of balance most appropriately when he said, "The board is in a tough position. It's not easy for a lay member of the community to take a budget and adopt it. After all, it was put together by a full-time professional educator, and then the board has to try to trim it. So they look at things like stoves for the home economics room. They don't want to pare education. It's very difficult. I think the board does the best job that they can."

The data presented clearly support the idea described that not one, but instead a combination of decision-making models, was utilized by the boards of education in the four school districts studied. As was presented the extent to which each model was used varied with the different situations encountered.

References

Allison, G. T. (1971). Essence of decisions. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Boyd, W. L. (1982, Summer). The political economy of public schools. Educational Administration Quarterly, 1(3),111-130.

Cibulka, J. G. (1987, February). Theories of education budgeting: Lessons from the management of decline. Educational Administration Quarterly, 23(1), 7-40.

Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1986). A garbage can model of organizational choice. In J. G. March & R. Weissinger-Baylon (Eds.), Ambiguity and Command (pp. 311-336). Massachusetts: Pitman Publishing.

Garmes, W. I. , Guthrie, J. W., & Pierce, L. C. (1978). School Finance: The Economics and Politics of Public Education. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Hartman, W. T. (1987). Understanding resource allocation in high schools. The Pennsylvania State University, Educational Policy Studies Division.

Hartman, W. T. (1988). School District Budgeting. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Jones, T. H. (1985). Introduction to School Finance Techniques and Social Policy, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Kerr, N. D. (1964, Fall). The school board as an agency of legitimation. In A. Rosenthal (Ed.). (1969). Governing Education: A Reader on Politics, Power, and Public School Policy (pp. 137-172). New York: Anchor Books Doubleday & Company.

Lutz, F. W. (1980, August). Local school board decision-making: A political-anthropological analysis. Education and Urban Society, 12(4), 452-465.

McGivney, J. H. , & Moynihan, W. (1972, December). School and community. Teacher's College Record, 74(2), 209-224.

Meyer, M. W. (Ed.). (1971). Structures, Symbols, and Systems: Readings on Organizational Behavior. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.

Owens, R. G. (1981). Organizational Behavior in Education, (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Peterson, P. E. (1976). School Politics Chicago Style. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Stokey, E., & Zeckhauser, R. (1978). A Primer for Policy Analysis. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.

Vidich, A. J., & Bensman, J. The clash of class interests in school politics. In A. Rosenthal. (Ed.). (1969). Governing Education: A Reader on Politics, Power and Public School Policy (pp. 225-252). New York: Anchor Books Doubleday and Company.

Wildavsky, A. (1975). Budgeting: A Comparative Theory of Budgetary Processes. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Zeigler, H. L., Jennings, M. K., & Peak, G. W. (1974). Governing American Schools: Political Interaction in Local School Districts. Massachusetts: Duxbury Press.